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Comment on Paper Entitled "China's New Solution: Intensified Agriculture  
Through Collectivization"

1. This paper addresses itself to the program of rapidly accelerated agricultural collectivization adopted by the Chinese Communists in the latter half of 1955 and seeks to analyse the program's origin, progress and prospects for success in the light of certain "socio-geographic factors." The admittedly complex nature of this problem and the consequent necessity of discussing political and economic factors lead the writer out of his field of competence and result in errors of interpretation as well as errors of fact.

2. A basic fallacy of the paper is its treatment of agricultural collectivization in isolation from other economic planning policies of the Chinese Communists. This leads to the incorporation of a recurring theme - collectivization now, industrialization next (pp 2,3,12) - which is not in accordance with the facts. It also results in presenting the speed up of agricultural collectivization as a unique phenomenon in 1955, whereas the tempo of socialization of private industry and commerce and of the handicraft industry was accelerated just as rapidly in this year, accompanied by a dramatic acceleration of the rate of socialist industrialization. Indeed, the generally accepted explanation for the tremendous upsurge in agricultural collectivization in 1955 is just the opposite of the author's thesis; namely, that Socialist industrialization was proceeding at so rapid a pace that it was necessary to impose greater controls on the countryside in order to secure the raw materials and revenues needed to support industrial production and construction.

3. Implicit in the author's discussion are certain political assumptions concerning the degree of control which the Chinese Communists are able to exert over the country and concerning the intentions of the Communist leaders. These assumptions in turn emerge in certain of the conclusions; for example, that the government is preparing a strategic area extending from the northeast to the southwest from which it will be able to control the remaining portions of the country and other countries on the Asian continent.

*Reasons for Collectivization*

1. To gain control of the food supply so that a urban workers could be fed, and raw materials made available to the State.
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4. Another weakness of the paper is its failure to take into account the historical background of China's economic planning and to treat the cooperativization program as a rapidly unfolding process which must be viewed in its entirety. Thus the main body of evidence which the writer presents concerns the uneven tempo of agricultural cooperativization between the different regions and provinces of China, evidence which is used to support certain sweeping conclusions about the political reliability of various provinces and about the geopolitical environment in which the Chinese Communists are forced to operate. However, the more generally accepted explanation for the diverging rate of cooperativization between different regions takes into account the following: (a) the fact that all major social, political and economic programs of the Chinese Communists since 1949 have been implemented first in the "old liberated area" of Northeast and North China, with Manchuria serving as a laboratory for social experimentation; (b) the fact that provinces with large admixtures of minority nationalities lag behind; (c) the influence of floods and other natural calamities; and (d) the retarding effect of undeveloped transportation and communications systems. The paper is poorly timed in two respects, since certain conclusions about the poor performance of cooperativization in individual provinces have already been disproved by subsequent developments and since the collectivization program is slated for basic completion in all of China before next year's spring planting.

5. The paper is marked by a number of errors in fact and by internal inconsistency. For example, the planned borders of collective farms do not coincide with the traditional hsiang, thus utilizing the rural tradition of community (p 11). The traditional hsiangs are being merged into much larger administrative areas (at a ratio of five to one in one province) for the very purpose of making them large enough to encompass a typical collective farm.

(b) The decision in mid-1955 to accelerate agricultural cooperativization was not preceded by a "two-year-old go-slow policy in agricultural cooperativization." (p 2). The same program adopted by the CCP Central Committee in October 1955 had been proclaimed in July of 1954, with subsequent slow-down in March of 1955.

(c) The phrase "new socio-economic goal: collectivization now, industrialization next" (p 2) is incorrect on two counts; collectivization has not and will not take precedence over industrialization; and the goal of collectivization is not now, having been spelled out in detail in December 1953 and being implicit before that.

(d) It is misleading to state that the shift to rapid rural socialization "ended the years of appeasement of the peasantry through land-reform and gentle coercion." (p 3) The Chinese Communists have been continuously engaged since 1951 in mobilizing the peasantry into various forms of cooperative organization, from temporary mutual-aid teams to permanent mutual aid teams to lower-level agricultural producer cooperatives to the higher-level cooperative (the collective).

(e) The explanation for the relatively advanced rate of cooperativization in Kwangsi Province is speculative. (p 5). The same strategic considerations advanced would apply to neighboring Yunnan Province. *What land routes in Yunnan?*

(f) If properly understood, the thesis underlying the entire section "Quality of Achievement" (pp 7-9) is startling. It would appear that the "present status of party leadership and control on the mainland" (p 9) may be determined on a provincial basis depending upon whether cooperativization goals were completed in October, November or December of 1955. This thesis overlooks such factors as the degree of latitude left to provincial party leadership in implementing central directives; the quantitative aspect of the targets themselves; and the fact that the harvest season falls in different months in different regions of the country.

(g) The discussion under "Regional application" on page 10 is puzzling. The statement "urban grain rationing was stressed in those provinces where maximum possible collectivization was desired" is incorrect. ~~No meaningful distinction between the~~ two groups of provinces listed is apparent nor are any conclusions drawn.

*puts! how as  
diagram!*

(h) The "provinces of the Yangtze Basin" are not those listed on p 10.

7) Kwichow Province should be excluded and the two additional provinces of Anhwei and Kiangsu should be included. Subsequent reporting has shown that two of these provinces, described here as provinces "of which least was expected in cooperativization" (p 10) are now in the forefront of the collectivization drive.

(i) The discussion of "River Control" (pp 14-15) is in error for the reason that river control planning does not support the theme of "collectivization now and industrialization next." The gigantic projects for harnessing the Yellow and Yangtze Rivers are directed both toward improvement of agriculture and toward providing power for industrial development. *but not just power.*

9) (j) The discussion under "The Lessons of Russian Experience" compounds the error listed in (e) above.

(k) The section "Conclusions" (p 15) is not related to preceding sections of the paper and makes no reference to the "Socio-geographic" factors which were to form the substance of discussion and the basis for final conclusions.

6. The author's complete lack of documentation has made the job of evaluation even more difficult.

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30 January 1957

Ch/G

THRU : Chief, D/OG  
Chief, GG/F

Substantive Aspects of GG/F Paper on Collectivization of Chinese Agriculture

25X1A9a 1. You will recall that in my memorandum of 6 December 1956 I detailed for you a complete chronology of the rather unusual course of events connected with the "coordination" of subject paper. At that time I indicated that a substantive statement on the differences of opinion and interpretation between ourselves and A/F was being prepared by [REDACTED] 25X1A9a

2. Forwarded herewith are [REDACTED] substantive rebuttals to the A/F commentary and a Memorandum for Record that he prepared for me on the subject. These are being sent to you for your information and for any action you deem appropriate.

3. It seems obvious that the chief basis for the divergent views involved here may be found in the fact that the A/F approach is narrower -- almost purely economic -- whereas the GG/F approach attempts to consider other significant aspects of the subject. Surely the logical way to resolve differing interpretations would have been through face-to-face coordination by the analysts concerned!

4. As things now stand, because Ch/F has gone on record as recommending non-publication of the bulk of the paper, and because the substantive content has become out-of-date since the original cutoff date, the obstacles to publication are formidable. I am inclined to agree with paragraph 3 of [REDACTED] Memorandum for Record and to recommend against further expenditure of GG/F effort on the topic. 25X1A9a

25X1A9a 5. The tone of [REDACTED] Memorandum for Record is, I think understandably, somewhat indignant. I have deliberately refrained from asking him to amend it, but I recommend that it not be sent outside the Geographic Research Area.

6. I do recommend, however, that the original GG/F draft, the A/F commentary, and the GG/F rebuttal be shown to Ch/E and to the AD/RR as indicative of one of the problems of intra-office coordination within ORR.

25X1A9a

25X1A9a [REDACTED]

GG/F: [REDACTED] bfr (30 Jan 57) Ext. 529

Enclosures: As shown on list, Attachment No. 1

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